Use Case 21: Detecting shifts in cell type composition in complex tissues using lineage specific markers and reference epigenomes from the Epigenome Atlas

American Society of Human Genetics Boston, MA

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Presented by the Bioinformatics Research Laboratory



Summary of Use Case 21

Background: Methylation profiling reflects the average level of cytosine methylation of the sampled cell population in different genomic regions. Complex tissue samples are typically composed of several different cell types, and different samples from the same tissue may have different proportions of constituent cell types. These differences often lead to variability in estimating methylation levels in different samples from same the tissue. In breast cancer, for example, immune cell infiltration is often observed. True differential methylation changes between cases and controls may thus be masked by differences that result from different proportions of constituent cell types found in breast cancer. Comparison of experimental breast cancer samples with reference epigenomes from the Human Epigenome Atlas provides an approach to help identify shifts in cell type composition in complex tissues.

Results: Comparing 450k array breast tumors and normal breast samples with reference methylomes in the Epigenome Atlas using heatmap tool, we find that 450k array tumor samples are more epigenetically similar to immune cell samples from the Atlas than the normal breast 450k samples. This indicates possible increase in proportion of immune cells in the tumor samples, which is consistent with previous studies.

Use case dataset

- Dedeurwaerder, S.et al. (2011) "Evaluation of the Infinium Methylation 450K technology", Epigenomics 3(6):771-84.
 - 16 breast tissue samples
 - Profiled using Illumina 450k array
 - 8 normal breast samples
 - 8 primary breast tumor samples
- NIH Roadmap Epigenome Data: <u>http://www.genboree.org/epigenomeatlas/multiGridViewerPublic.rhtml</u>
 - 45 MeDIP-seq (16 different cell types)
 - 108 RRBS (67 different cell types)
 - 57 WGBS (45 different cell types)
 - Please see slide 42 for introduction to MeDIP, RRBS, WGBS, and 450k array

Genomic regions used in comparisons

- **Background:** Some CpGs that are interrogated by the Illumina 450k array are methylated/unmethylated specifically in one cell lineage in the Epigenome Atlas. These lineage specific CpGs are much more informative about cell type composition of a complex tissue sample, than the other CpGs. In order to reduce the noise introduced by having uninformative CpGs in the comparison, we will select and use in the comparison only the lineage specific CpGs in the 450k array.
- Results: Cell lineages were identified by hierarchical clustering of all cell types in the Atlas using different epigenomic marks (H3K4me1, H3K4me3, etc), followed by selection of clusters of cell types that were consistently observed. 18 cell lineages were selected this way. We then quantified the level of methylation in each methylome track for the regions probed by the 450k array. A comparison between level of methylation in each cell lineage with cells not in that lineage was then performed for each of the regions probed in the 450k array using the LIMMA tool. CpGs that were consistently methylated/unmethylated in cells from a lineage (i.e. myeloid), yet exhibited the opposite methylation status in all other lineages, were considered lineage specific CpGs, and were used to generate the ROI track we will use in this experiment.

Marker CpGs resource

- On Genboree there are public available sets of CpGs that we selected as markers for cell lineages.
 - 450k array CpGs
 - 27k array CpGs
 - Overlapping 450k and 27k CpGs
- LIMMA tool on Genboree can be used to select your own set of lineage specific loci

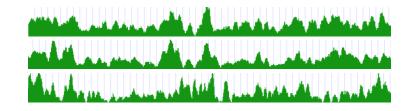
Methodology Overview

Select Atlas data tracks: Use "View Track Grid" tool to select methylome tracks from the Epigenome Atlas generated by each experiment type

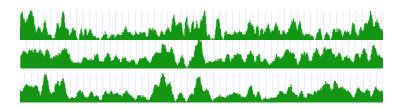
Select 450k array data tracks: Use

"View Track Grid" tool to select methylome tracks from the Epigenome Atlas generated by each experiment type

Epigenome Atlas Methylomes

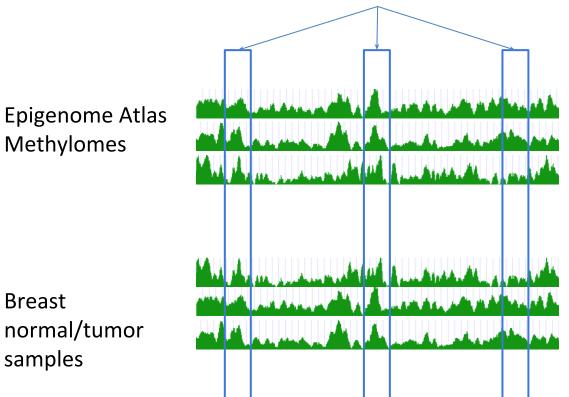


Breast normal/tumor samples



Methodology Overview

Extract methylation levels: Calculate the average level of methylation in each of the chosen loci for each input track. This is done automatically by the heatmap tool.



450k array cell lineage marker loci

	L	ocus 1.	Locus 2	Locus 3		
Cell type 1		0.8	0.3			
Cell type 2		0.7	0.6	0.7		
Cell type 3		0.6	0.8	0.2		
		Locus	Locus 2	Locus 3		
		1				
Breast	1	0.6	0.8	0.2		
Breast	2	0.8	0.7	0.3		
Breast	Breast 3 0.7		0.8	0.2		

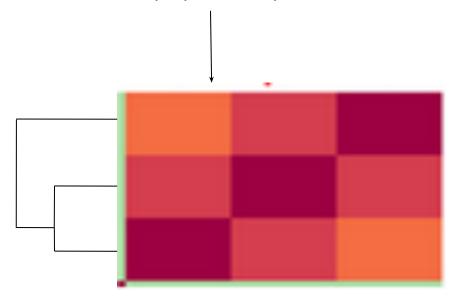
Breast normal/tumor samples

Methodology Overview

Breast normal/tumor samples

						-	•
	Locus 1	Locus 2	Locus 3		Locus 1	Locus 2	Locus 3
Cell type 1	0.8	0.7	0.3	Breast 1	0.6	0.8	0.2
Cell type 2	0.7	0.6	0.7	 Breast 2	0.8	0.7	0.3
Cell type 3	0.6	0.8	0.2	Breast 3	0.7	0.8	0.2

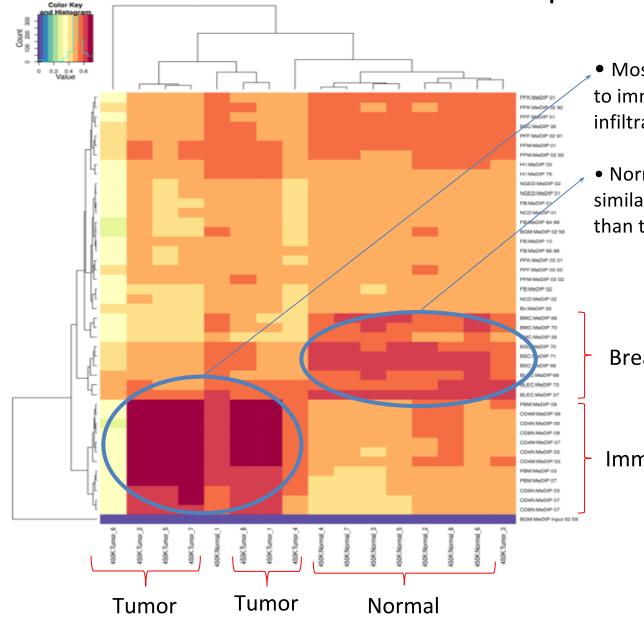
Compute similarity between samples: Calculate Euclidian distance between all pairs of samples, being one breast 450k sample and one methylome from the Atlas. Also performed automatically by heatmap tool.



Hierarchical clustering and heatmap plotting

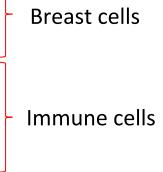
Epigenome Atlas Methylomes

Expected results: Comparison Breast450k vs Atlas MeDIP-seq

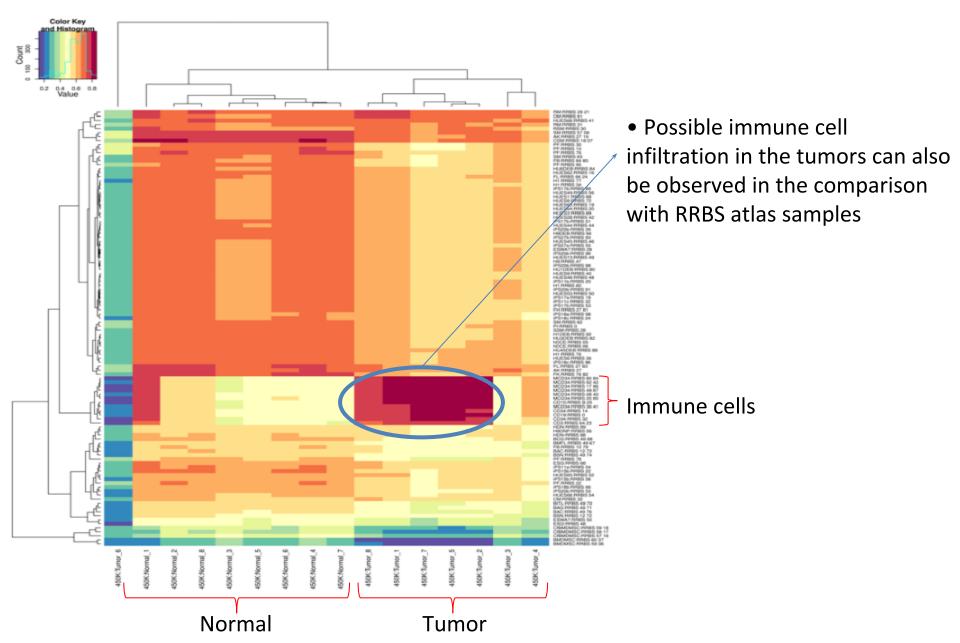


• Most tumors have increased similarity to immune cells, indicating immune cell infiltration.

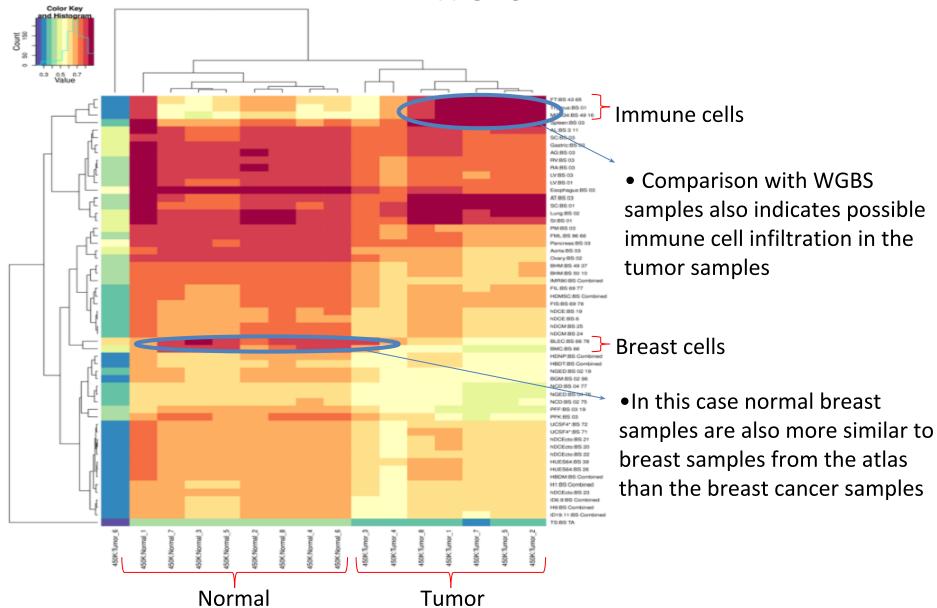
• Normal breast samples are more similar to breast samples from the Atlas than the breast cancer samples.



Expected results: Comparison Breast450k vs Atlas RRBS



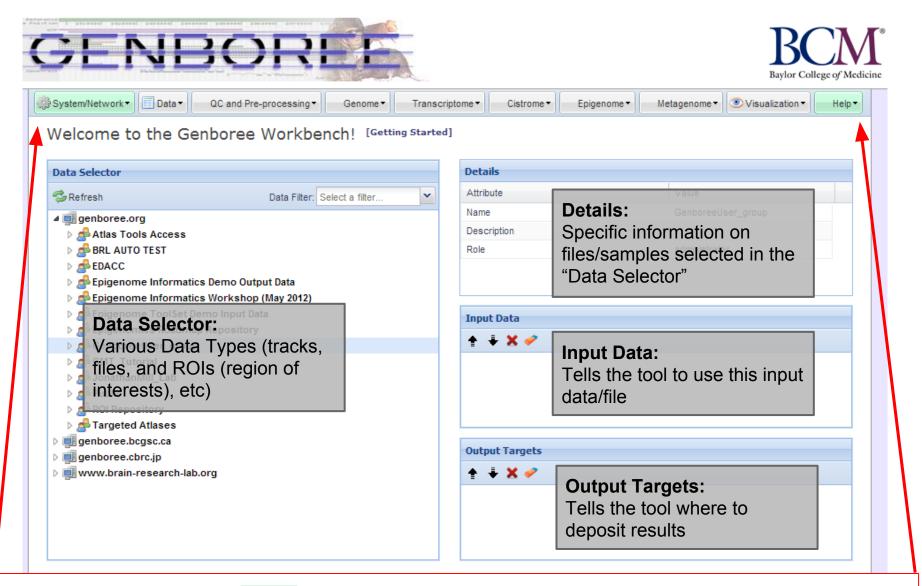
Expected results: Comparison Breast450k vs Atlas WGBS



New Genboree Users - Slides 13-17 provide steps for new Genboree users on how to create a database and a project page.

Existing Genboree Users - If you have attended past Genboree Workshops or are familiar with the Genboree Workbench then you may briefly review these slides and start on slide 18 for the actual use case

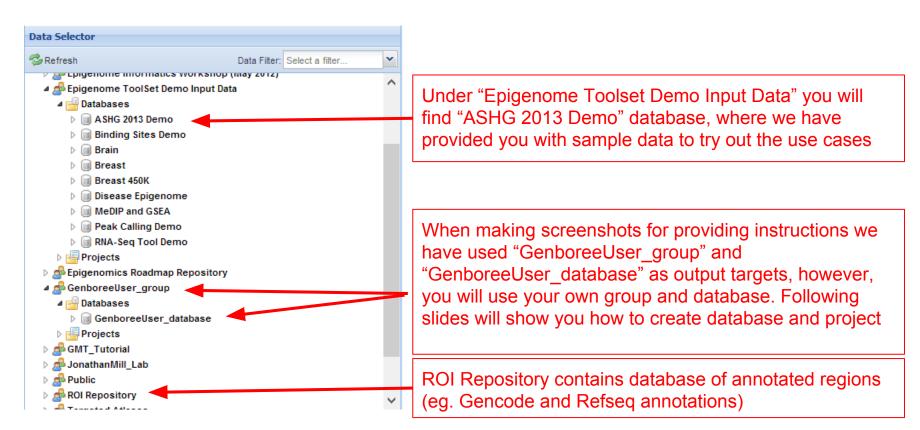
The Genboree Workbench: Web-based Data Management & Analysis



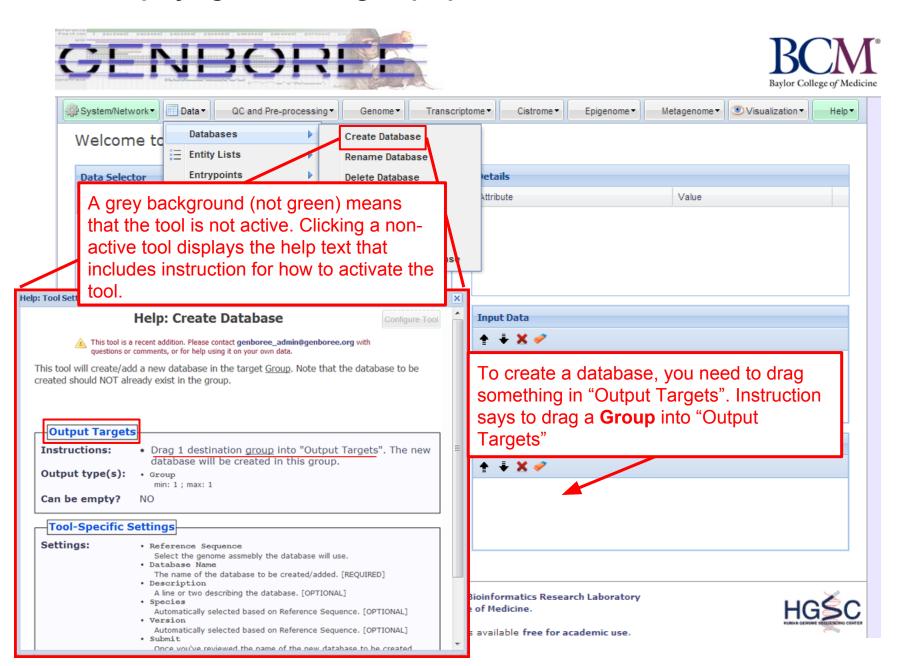
Important: Toolset Menu turns **GREEN** when "Input Data" and "Output Targets" are properly populated for a tool to run. Please note that "System/Network" and "Help" options are always green since "User Profile", "Jobs", and "Request Feature" are always available for use and do not need "Input Data" and "Output Targets" to be populated.

Preparation Prior to Starting the Use Case

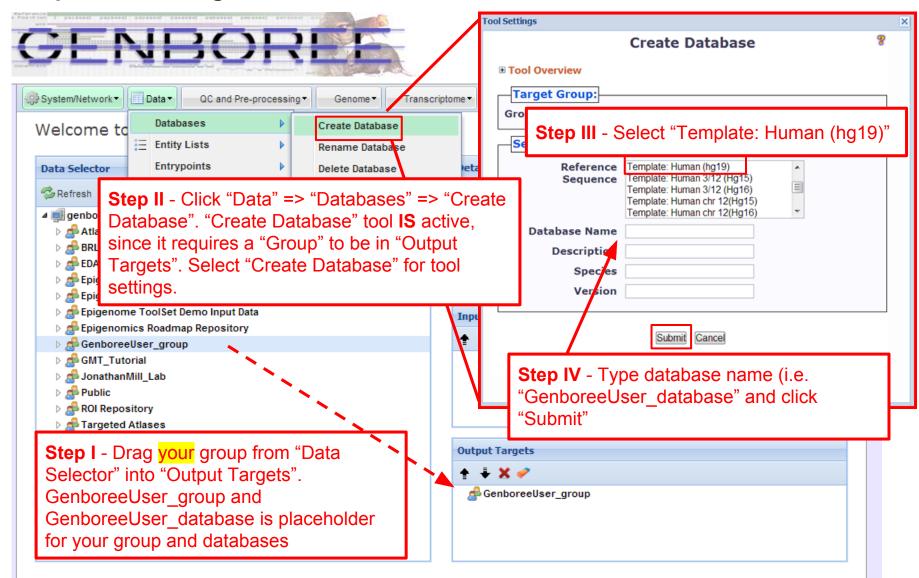
- "GenboreeUser_group" is a name template for an automatically created Genboree user group for you where "GenboreeUser" is your user name.
- Similarly, "GenboreeUser_database' is a name template for your database.
- Of course, you may create many more databases and may create and be member of many other groups.



Displaying Tool Setting help options in the Workbench



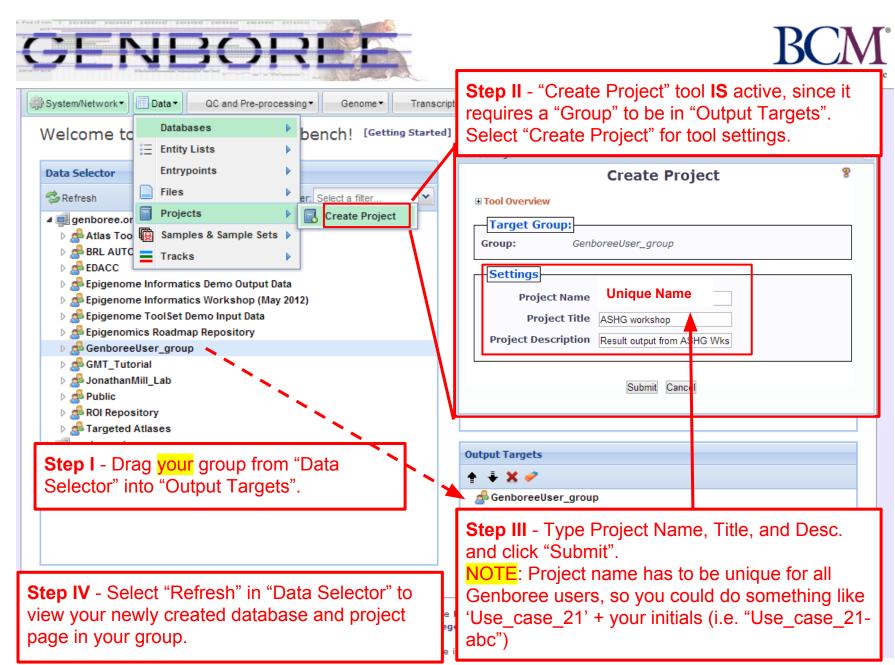
Steps for Creating a Database

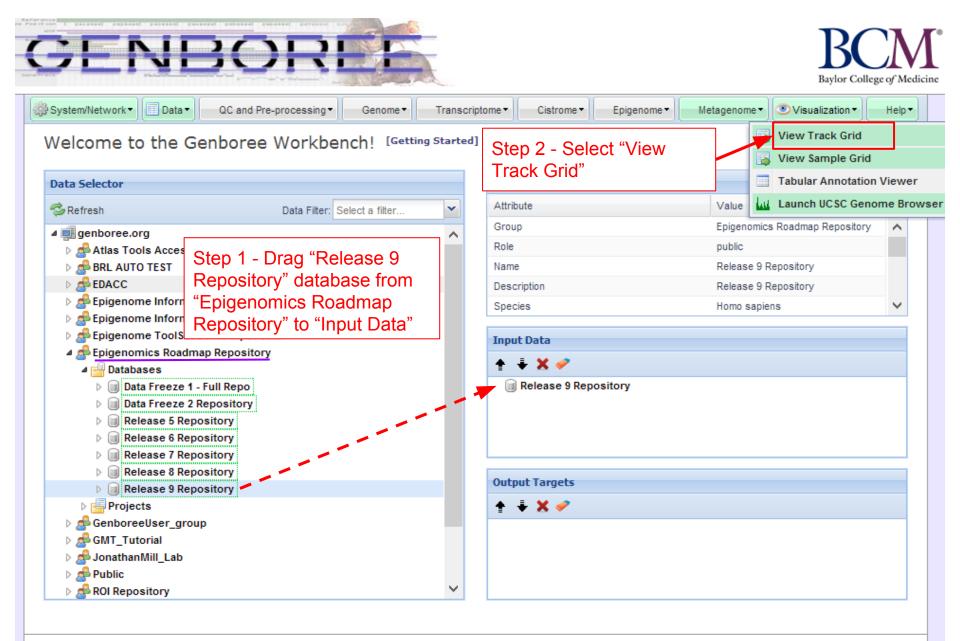






Steps for Creating a Project page









Select how you want the tracks displayed in the "View Track Grid" tool.

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Y-axis attribute eaSampleType	Step 4 - Select "eaSample Type"
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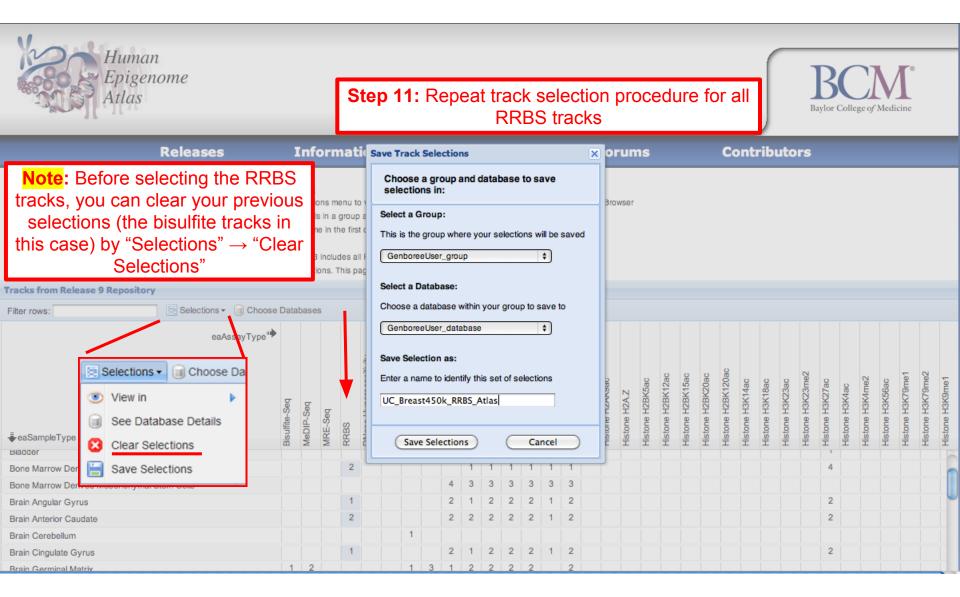


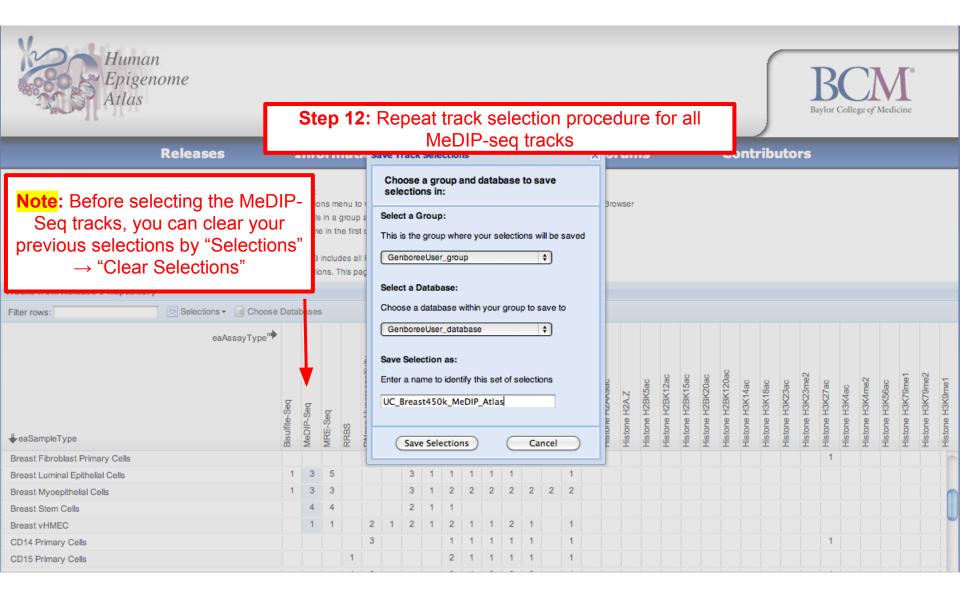
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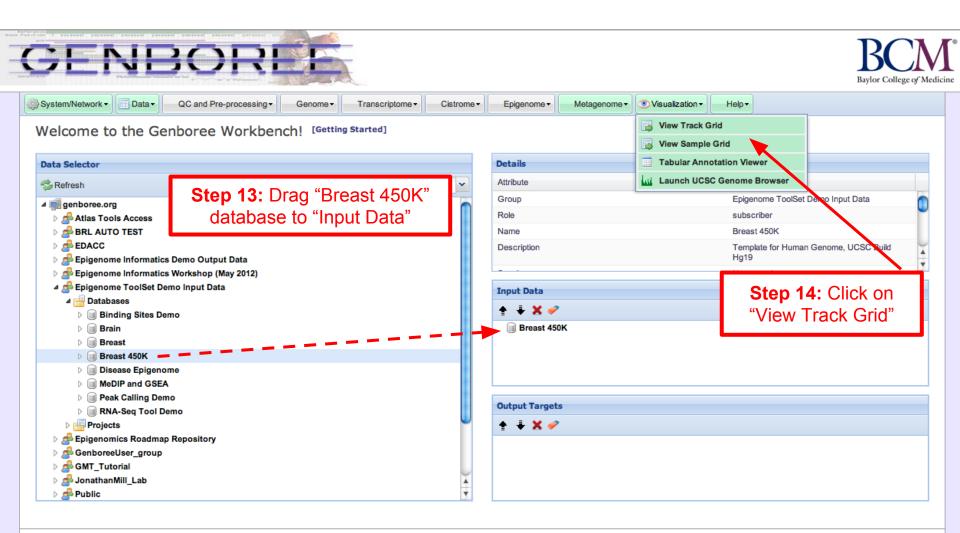




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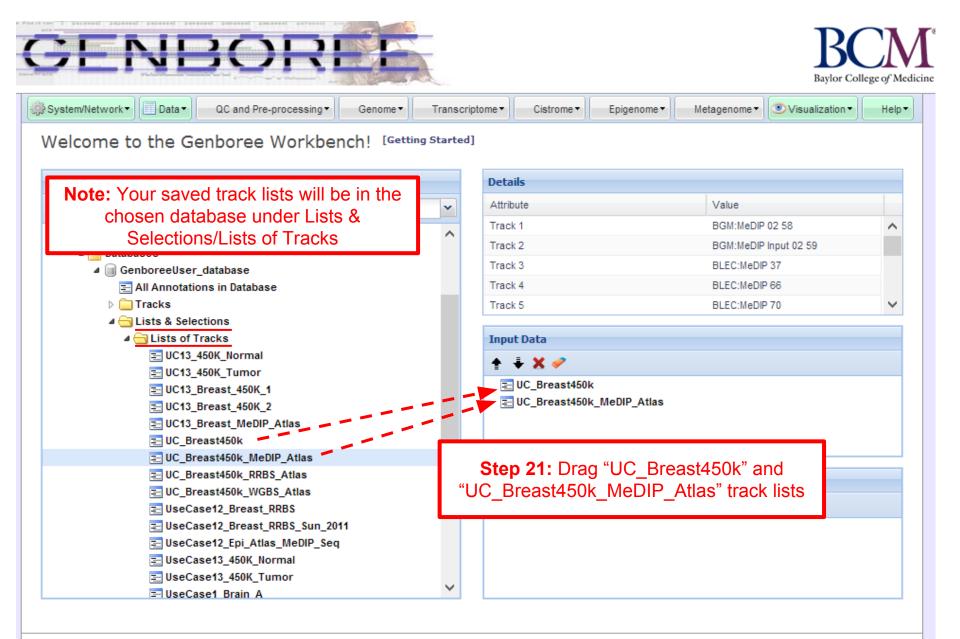












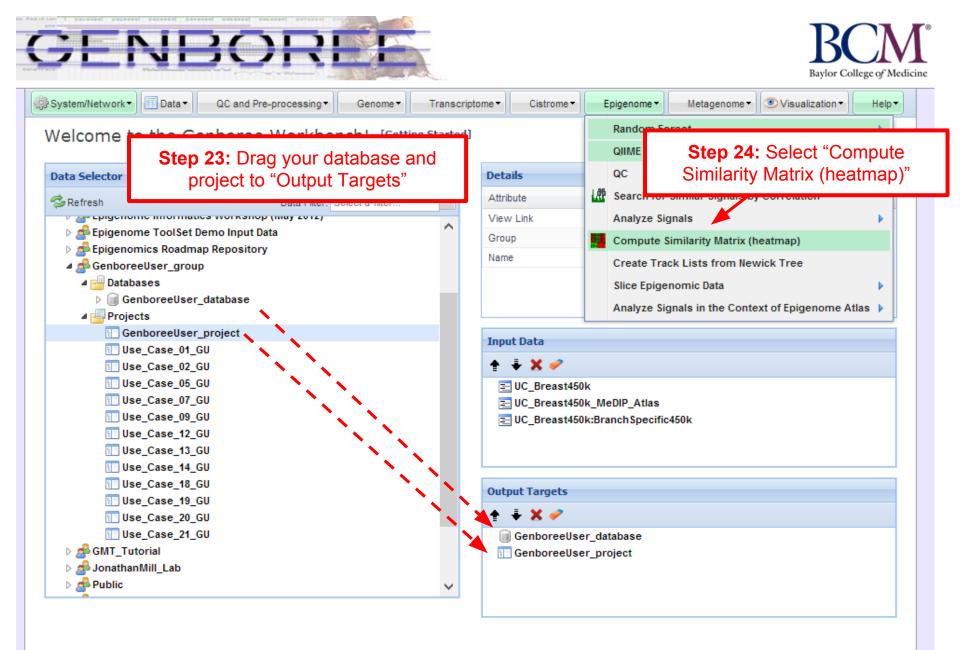




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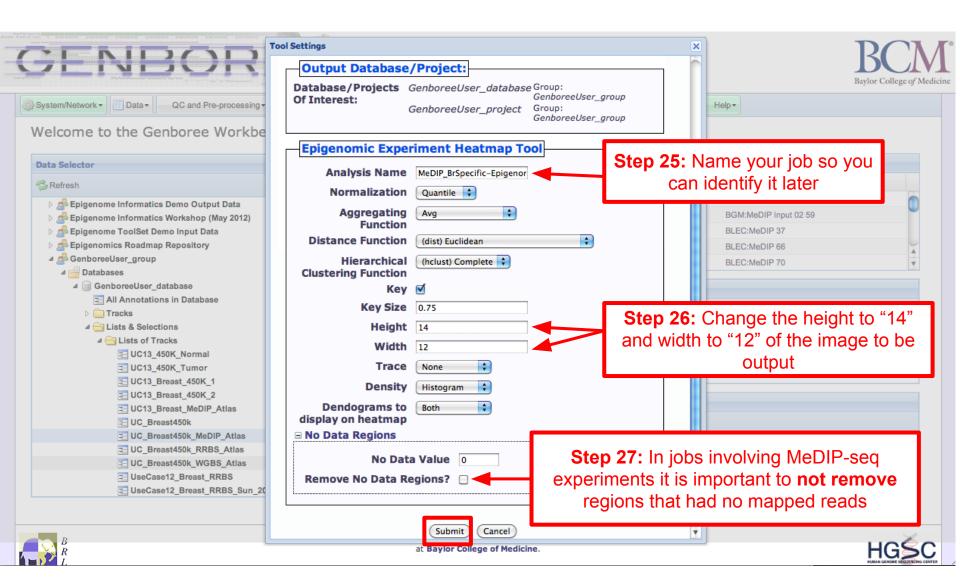


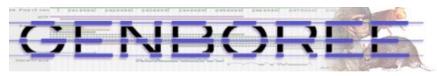










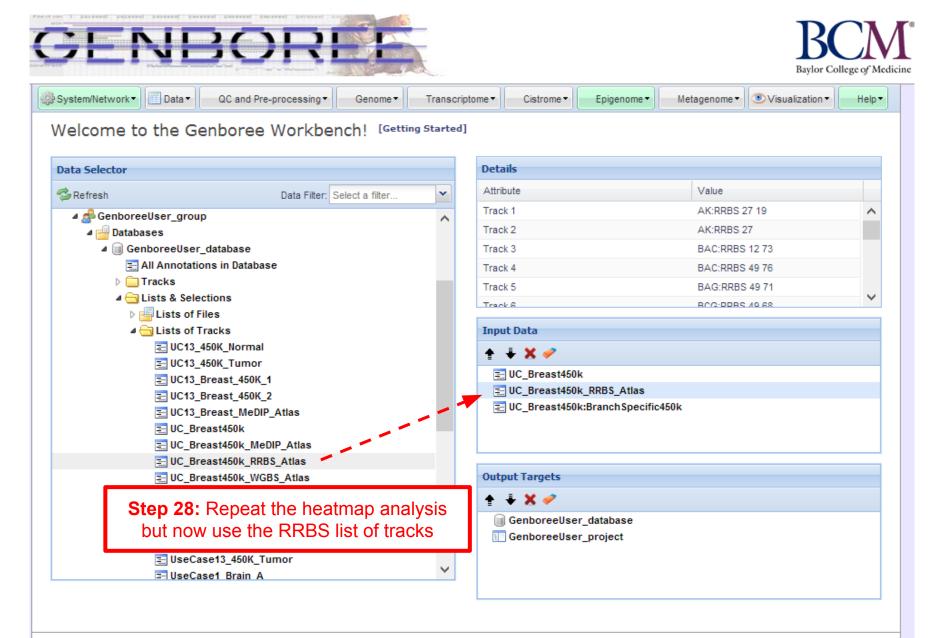




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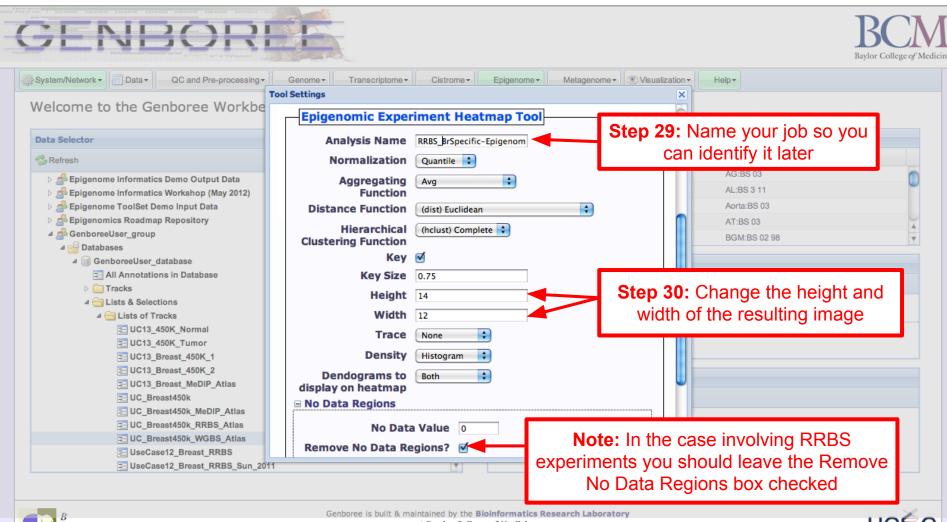






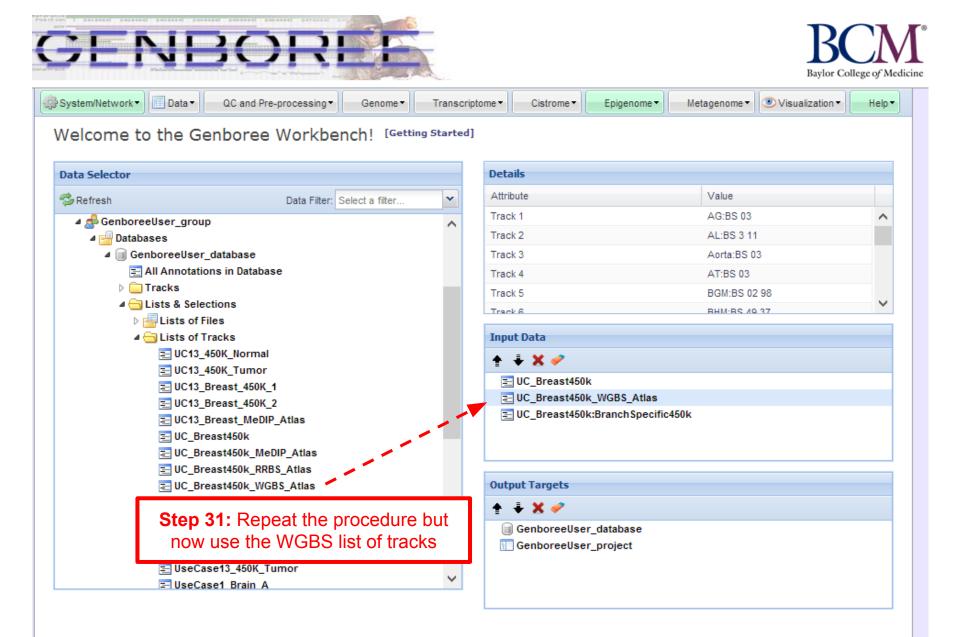






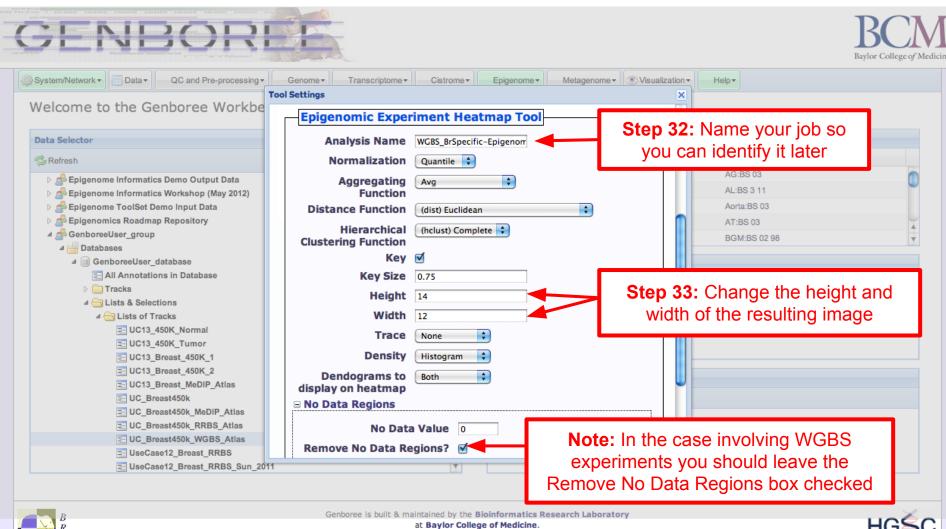


at Baylor College of Medicine.



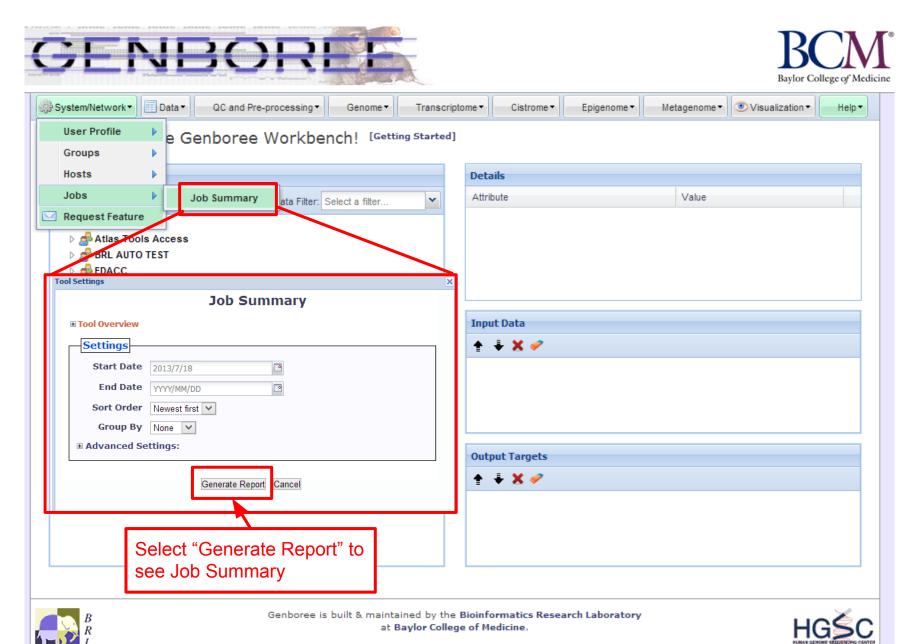






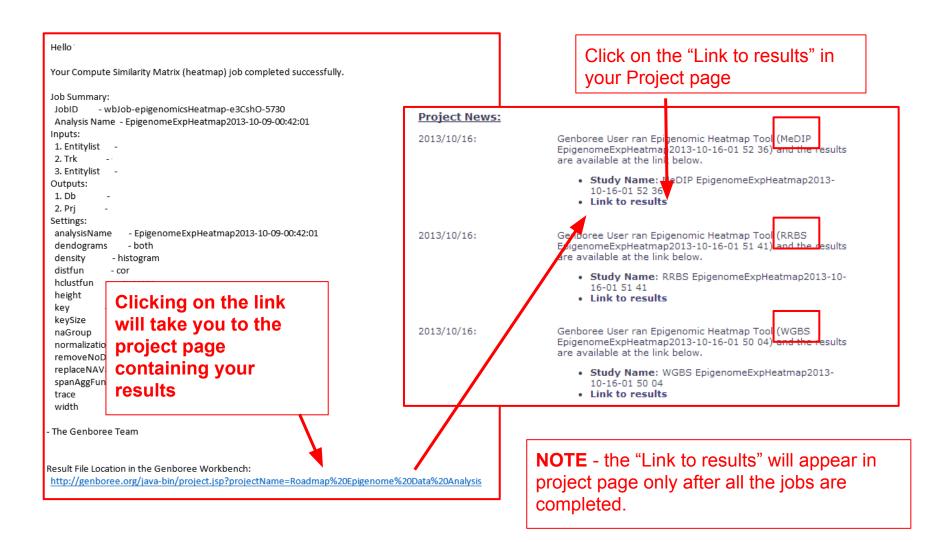


Status of the jobs submitted can be obtained through Job Summary



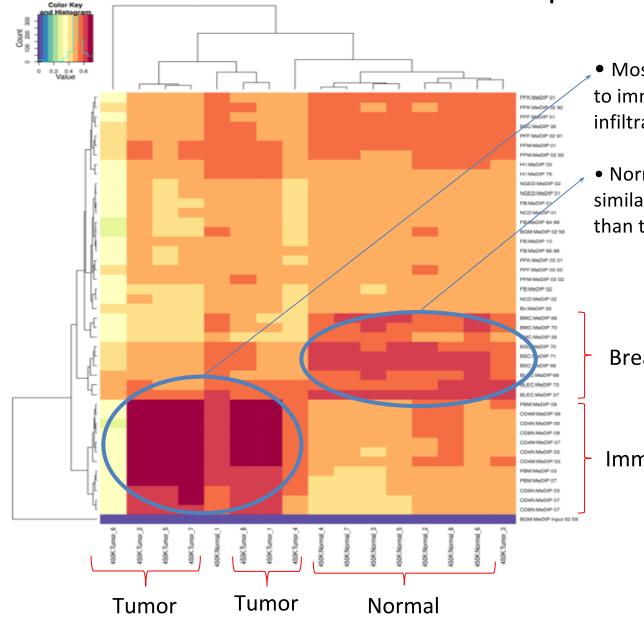


You will get the following e-mail message when your job is completed



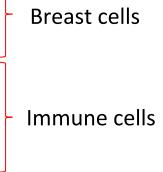
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Equal Branch Lengths Rows [PNG] [SVG] Columns [PNG] [SVG] Scaled Branch Lengths Rows [PNG] [SVG] Columns PNG] SVG] Natural Log Scaled Branch Lengths Rows [PNG] [SVG] Columns [PNG] [SVG] Log10 Scaled Branch Lengths Rows [PNG] [SVG] Columns [PNG] [SVG]	Note: Other types of plots are also generated by the heatmap tool. One of them is a correlation plot, which plots Pearson correlation metric between the tracks involved in this job. The other types of plots are hierarchical clustering generated dendrograms. The information in these plots is similar to what can be observed in the heatmap plot, but the representation may be more appropriate in

Expected results: Comparison Breast450k vs Atlas MeDIP-seq

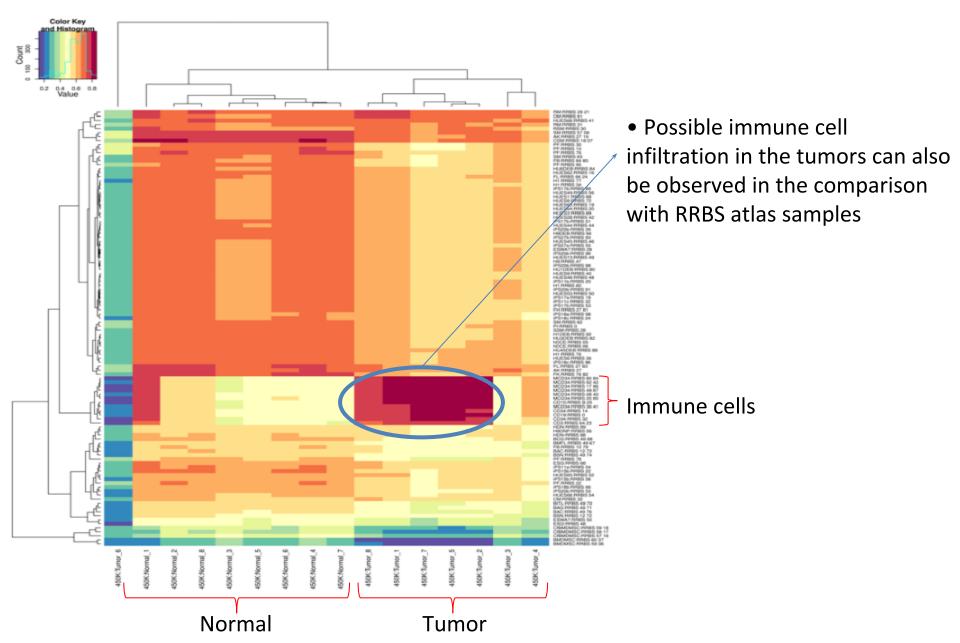


• Most tumors have increased similarity to immune cells, indicating immune cell infiltration.

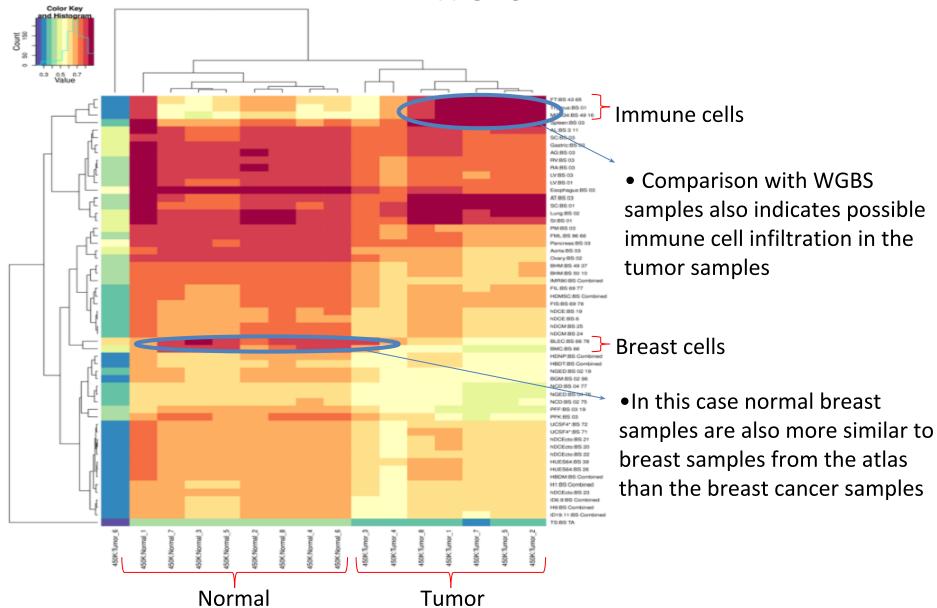
• Normal breast samples are more similar to breast samples from the Atlas than the breast cancer samples.



Expected results: Comparison Breast450k vs Atlas RRBS



Expected results: Comparison Breast450k vs Atlas WGBS



Help us improve Genboree. Please provide a comment or request feature.

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Appendix: Methylation profiling techniques

- WGBS (Whole Genome Bisulfite Sequencing): Bisulfite is used to convert unmethylated cytosines into uracils in extracted genomic DNA. Bisulfite treated DNA is then sheared, amplified, and sequenced.
- **RRBS (R**educed **R**epresentation **B**isulfite **S**equencing): Genomic DNA sample is digested with Mspl, which cuts DNA at its recognition site (CCGG) independently of its methylation status. The fragments are then size separated and only those with size between 40bp and 220bp are selected, enriching for CpG rich regions. Bisulfite treatment followed by sequencing is then applied to selected fragments.
- MeDIP-seq (Methylated DNA ImmunoPrecipitation followed by Sequencing): Uses 5methylcytosine specific antibodies to select for DNA fragments that contain methylate d CpGs through immunoprecipitation. This process is then followed by high throughput sequencing.
- **Illumina Infinium 450k Array:** Genomic DNA is treated with bisulfite, fragmented, and amplified. DNA is then hybridized to a bead array. Each bead is covered with 50bp probes complementary to a region with one CpG. Some probes will match the CpG region assuming it was methylated, and had its cytosine converted to an uracil by bisulfite. Other probes will match the unmethylated version of the CpG. An extension reaction is then performed using fluorescently labeled nucleotides. Only probes with a perfect match to the interrogated locus will be extended. Fluorescence intensity is proportional to the level of methylation.